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Wrentham, January 18, 1905.

COPY

Dearest little Billy-

Teacher says this is her letter, not mine, though I am doing all the writing and making all the really good sentences, if there are any, which there ain't. We have no ideas left, for Teacher has just dictated me a thousand words to Mr. Rogers about the coal mine. There was a stockholders' meeting last night and I went in loco Teacher and Mrs. H. We don't think there is much money for us in the old blank, blank chebang. But Mr. Rogers wanted to know all the particulars and Teacher has written him so many that he will probably say, " Lord, how these women do talk!" I saw Aunt Polly and she all but kissed me in the presence of all those people and she is very full of affectionate congratulations, so I take back what I said about her lack of enthusiasm for me. Teacher saw Mrs. Fuller today and she says that the Doctor suspected us last summer, but Mrs. Fuller did not suspect and she accused the doctor of always seeing things when there was nothing to see. For once the man was right! But Mathews, my colleague in the Youth's Companion, who had a chance to see us, never suspected, while his wife who had only heard him talk about us suspected at once. So did a cousin of mine who saw you and Teacher once at our flat, you remember the time at mother's in Cambridge.

Mr. Farrington said that the only sign of intimacy he ever beheld was that I jollied teacher for being Irish, and he thought there must be something between us if I was so familiar and discussed such unmentionable things. He is very much impressed with the things that he has read about me in the papers, apropos of the announcement of our engagement, and he is especially impressed with the fact that I belonged to so many clubs. At the church supper tonight which we all attended he said to Teacher in a very respectful voice, " I had no idea he was so popular, and the Globe said he is one of the rising literary men of Boston." Now what do you think of that for fame and fortune and men's eyes! Mrs. Farrigton said that she called her family together and read EVERY WoRD of the Globe account. We have been infested with lying reporters. In my absence one ofthem called and got a photograph from the man who took you in the orchard with Phiz, by alleging that I had given permission. Now there is mendacity! He came to interview Teacher, and Mrs. Hopkins encountered him and of course he saw that she was simpleminded. He told her I had given him a picture of me (lie) and that I had given permission for Teacher to give him her picture (lie). Poor Mrs. Hopkins was confused but held her own and did not give him anything. Mr. Fisher told Teacher that I was a fine man. That is what comes of giving him so many cigars.

"Gorry," he said , " I knew it all the time!" The village interest is divded between thequestions how old we are and when the event is to take place.

We had a fine message over the telephone from Mrs Carruth who calls me a very "old friend" and is coming to see us next week. Teacher wants me to send you some of the letters we have got. Most people are fine! Phiz followed me to the train Friday and I sent him home. That night I stayed in town. When I came back next day, I found Teacher in distress, not because she had missed me but because Phiz had not returned. We found later that he had gone into the school house to the great delight of the children. By the way, Teacher says that Phiz and the new Jap servant are more comfort to her than I am. Phiz came home on a halter looking very sheepish. Every time Teacher spoke to him, he hung his head and felt ashamed of his spree. That is a base humilty for a good male animal to show. I never reveal such spirit when I have been on a spree. The Jap, whose name is Kawakami, which Mrs. Hopkins insists on calling Yokahama, is a joy to Teacher, no doubt because she has a man she can really boss. He slides noiselessly round the house and does his work deftly, though he is a green one. His only trouble is with the furnace which he has not got the hang of yet. When he wants to be more than polite to Teacher, he says, " No, sah; yes, sah." When she asked him if he slept war , he said " Nothings." He told her seriously that the emperor on

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Japan is four thousand years old. That beats the old longevity of Bible heroes. It is as if all the wishes of Rip Van Winkle that his friends shold live long and prosper had come true in one man. Kawakami made a fine cake the other day, and bore it in top side up in the pudding dish! Teacher laughed right out, and the poor fellow was awfully embarrassed. But he is quick and he had the cake inverted properly in a plate before you could turn round. He seems to eat nothing and when Teacher asks him what he eats, he says, " Me no likes meat almost." He is cold in the attic although he has three comforters. But he had no night clothes till today when Teacher and I went to Jordan's and bought him some flannelette shirts. He has been taking Teacher's hot water bag to bed with him. At night when his work is done he studies English and Japanese papers.

By the way, you will get from Baltimore some books, your Story, to be signed and returned—for a fair for a consumptive hospital. The work for the blind is going on. Maine is doing something and wants you to help. There is a bill beforethe legislature for a seventyfive thousand dollar appropriation, and it was thought you could appear to advantage in Portland. Perhaps you will be willing to do this for the cause when you get home. Colorado is next. A charitable organization there writes for information. I have forwarded the letter to Mr. Campbell.

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We shall be glad to see you and Villa as soon as Mother Keller finds out what a bad girl you are and sends you back to us. If you cannot eat all the good things they make in the South, I don't see what we can do with you here. Did Teacher ~~use~~ read your figures correctly? Would it ~~take~~ cost fifty dollars to take you and Villa to Montgomery and back? Why, two people could go to New York and back from Boston for twnety-five dollars Of course she wants you to go if you want to and she will send you some money soon. McClure's have not paid for the article yet, but I suppose they will in a few days when the check goes through the mills of the office. She thinks that it would be nice for you to stop over and see Sister Mary if you come home that way. If you come by way of Washington it will be out of your way. ~~Besides~~ Besides, when we hear that you have started for home, I doubt if we shall wait very patiently while you visit by the wayside. Much love to you all from us including Kawakami.

John.